



Ontario Catholic Education

**Ongoing
Adult Faith
Formation:
The Key To
Educating
The Soul**

Successful Practices

*Published by the
Institute for Catholic Education*

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Ontario Catholic Education Ongoing Adult Faith Formation: The Key To Educating The Soul —
Successful Practices

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My Friends in Ontario Catholic Education:

September 2000 marks the 160th anniversary of publicly funded Catholic education in Ontario. This is a significant milestone for the Church of Ontario. It is, as well, a special moment for the entire Catholic education community in the province: we celebrate both the enduring quality of Catholic education and the uncommon perseverance and passionate commitment to the mission of Catholic schools, past and present.

Record enrolment and the vibrancy of spirit experienced in Catholic school communities today testify both to the exceptional quality of education our schools offer and to the preference of our parents for an education based on a faith perspective. Clearly, Catholic education continues to be a great gift for families, for the Church and for society. The Catholic school is the place where many young Catholics are introduced to the person of Jesus, schooled in the ways and meaning of prayer, and "experience the Church, as an alternative community which is shaped more by faith, hope and love than by the values of our consumer culture." (Ontario Conference of Catholic Bishops, *This Moment of Promise*, p.16)

Catholic education is a gift that requires great care and loving attention on the part of *all* of its partners if it is to be conserved and enhanced through the new millennium. The pivotal challenge confronting the Catholic education community at the beginning of the 21st century is the compelling need for all of us to own our distinctive *vocation* in the Church. To aid in this ownership process continuing faith formation is imperative.

We are very pleased with the new resource developed by the Institute for Catholic Education. *Ongoing Adult Faith Formation: The Key to Educating the Soul - Successful Practices* is intended to assist the Catholic education community in Ontario in both a reflection on, and a response to, the pressing need for ongoing adult faith formation in order to remain true to our purpose and reason for existence. We rejoice in all that is already taking place.

As we celebrate this Jubilee Year, we pray that the Risen Christ, through his all learning and all teaching Spirit, may continue to strengthen and guide us in the sacred mission of Catholic education. And may we all continue to be sustained in our baptismal faith that: *In Christ a new age has dawned, the long reign of sin is ended, a broken world has been renewed, and we are once again made whole. (Preface of Easter IV)*

May every partner in Ontario Catholic education become a more prophetic witness to this Easter gospel!

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. James Doyle, D.D.
Bishop of Peterborough
Chair of the Education Commission

August 15, 2000
Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
World Youth Day

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INTRODUCTION

You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud: on the tenth day of the seventh month – on the day of atonement – you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you.

Leviticus 25: 8-10

As we cross the threshold of the third millennium, education in Ontario has undergone many changes, especially to governance, funding and curriculum. For the Catholic education community, the year 2000 brings a distinctive and significant challenge, which has profound implications for the future of our system – *the faith formation of all involved in Catholic education*. There is a generational change taking place within the ranks of Catholic education. Many experienced and committed educators are retiring. New personnel are moving into administration. A younger generation of teachers is being hired. A new cycle of trustee and school council membership is coming forward. It is imperative for the Catholic community to support new teachers, administrators, trustees and school council members so they can understand and can demonstrate that the Gospel, rooted in Jesus' ideal of self-sacrificial love and social solidarity, presents a clear and alternative vision to much of what our students experience in our mass-mediated consumer culture.

As Catholics we bring a distinct perspective to the millennium, that of Jubilee. Each of the Jubilee themes – *stewardship of the earth, release from bondage, and redistribution of wealth* – has to do with reconciliation, with restoring right relationships. For all people, but especially Christians, the present state of the world – the widening gap between rich and poor, the victims of war, the marginalization of the indigenous, racism, sexism, the plight of farmers, child slavery and poverty, and environmental degradation – demands conversion. In *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, Pope John Paul II says that “*the call to conversion as the indispensable condition of Christian love is particularly important in contemporary society, where the very foundation of an ethically correct vision of human existence often seems to have been lost*”. For Pope John Paul the primary objective of the Jubilee is “*the strengthening of faith and of the witness of Christians*” (42).

The year 2000 presents the Catholic education community with both gift and challenge.

Jubilee as Gift

The vision of Jubilee is rooted in the spirit of the Sabbath. Jewish scholars tell us that the Sabbath was created not because God needed a rest, but in order to sanctify rest, to demand rest of us, so that by resting in God we can re-create ourselves as a new people. In Judaism, the tradition of the seventh day was extended to include the sabbatical year, a Sabbath year every seven years, and the Jubilee, the seventh sabbatical year. The Jubilee is the “Sabbath of

Sabbaths” where for a year the land was to lie fallow and the people were to rest so that they might listen to and answer the voice of their God. For those involved in Catholic education the Jubilee summons us to presence, to mindfulness, to contemplation and to conversion. The Jubilee is a gift, a heightened holy time, which invites us in the Catholic education community to reflect on our faith tradition so that we might re-create ourselves in fresh and penetrating ways for the challenges of the new century.

Jubilee as Challenge

While there are many aspects of our culture that are good and should be embraced, a reflection on the meaning of Jubilee invites all of the partners in Catholic education to look hard at aspects of the current cultural and educational values which are potentially dehumanizing or contrary to our faith tradition. Such a Jubilee critique challenges us, as well, to reexamine the mandate of the Catholic education we offer in all its dimensions – curriculum, policies and relationships.

a) Stewardship for the Earth

- In a world of overwhelming and worsening ecological devastation, **the Jubilee calls us to see God’s sacramental presence in the world, that the land ultimately belongs to God and humans are to treat the environment with reverence, care and awe.**
- In the new nanosecond culture where workloads have increased and leisure decreased, **the Jubilee challenges us to give rest to the land of our own lives, to observe Sabbath and to take the time to slow down . . . to pause . . . to reflect . . . to pray . . . to let God be God for us.**
- In a technological-scientific society, **the sabbatical Jubilee teaching intends to prevent us from treating production and technology as ends in themselves, but to examine them in light of their environmental and social effect.**

b) Release from Bondage

- In a world where Third World debt is responsible for widespread malnutrition and hunger, increased infant mortality, loss of land and disruption of traditional cultures, widespread ecological degradation and increased violence and unrest, **the Jubilee vision maintains that humans belong to no one but God, and demands liberation and cancellation of the debt.**
- In a culture of consumerism which promotes narrow individualism, marketability, relativism, self-centeredness, immediate gratification, greed, violence and addiction, **the Jubilee vision encourages inclusivity, community, compassion, generosity, cooperation, human dignity, peace, and justice.**

- In secular cultures where public discourse has excluded reference to God or to revealed truth, **the Jubilee encourages the development of a spirituality which offers a mature understanding and relationship with the divine.**

c) Redistribution of Wealth

- In the world of increasing globalization that has widened the gap between the rich and poor, both in Canada and abroad, **the Jubilee demands economic justice and the promotion of the common good.**
- In an environment of economic restructuring with increasingly high levels of unemployment and underemployment, stagnating or declining wages, and increasing job insecurity, **the Jubilee promotes a spirituality which discovers the creative and holy meaning of work in its communal relationship with both nature and society and ultimately with the Creator.**
- In a culture which encourages a myth of individualism and the collapse of social solidarity, **the Jubilee invites us to strengthen community at the levels of family, neighbourhood, workplace, and society as a whole.**

The Vocation of the Catholic Educator

In his proclamation at Nazareth, Jesus, following the prophet Isaiah, centres his ministry in the Jubilee tradition.

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim
release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind
to let the oppressed go free,
to proclaim the years of the Lord's favour.*

Luke 4: 18, 19

To believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Lord of all history, and to want to share this experience of faith with students is at the heart of the vocation of the Catholic educator. This vocation finds its most profound meaning and sense of purpose in the Catholic educator's love for, understanding and practice of our Catholic Christian faith. It is the understanding and daily living out of this faith on the part of Catholic educators, more than anything else, that imprints the distinctive Catholic character on the education we offer. But to achieve this understanding, it must be worked at diligently and systematically. To understand one's faith so that one can more effectively witness to Jesus and to the gospel in the challenging context of the contemporary Catholic school demands effort – on the part of all the partners in the Catholic education community. It demands continuing faith formation.

Ongoing Formation

There are already many exceptional faith formation programs that now enrich the Catholic education community in the province:

- the pre-service religious education programs in the Ontario Faculties of Education
- the three Religion AQ courses sponsored jointly by the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association and the Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association
- the Ontario Catholic Curriculum Cooperatives
- the annual *When Faith Meets Pedagogy* Conference
- the *Certificate in Catholic Leadership Programs*

As well, many Ontario Catholic school boards have invested substantially in faith formation personnel.

The Institute for Catholic Education has published several recent documents to assist the Catholic education community with curriculum and faith development. These include the following:

Curriculum Matters – A Resource for Catholic Educators (1996)
Writing Curriculum for Catholic Schools – A Framework (1996)
Ontario Catholic Education and the Corporate Sector (1997)
Educating the Soul – Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools (1998)

Most recently, the Institute for Catholic Education has published the *Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations*. This document outlines seven distinct expectations for the Catholic graduate which serve as the source of curriculum design in both elementary and secondary panels, viz.,

- a discerning believer formed in the Catholic Faith community,
- an effective communicator,
- a reflective and creative thinker,
- a self-directed, responsible, life long learner,
- a collaborative contributor,
- a caring family member,
- a responsible citizen

These expectations of the graduates of our Catholic schools have their foundation in a distinctive Christian anthropology.

Catholic education views human life as an integration of body, mind and spirit. Rooted in this vision, Catholic education fosters the search for knowledge as a lifelong spiritual and academic quest. The expectations of Catholic graduates,

therefore, are described not only in terms of knowledge and skills, but in terms of values, attitudes and actions. (Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations)

Catholic education encourages not only academic excellence, but also the development of learned young women and men who have a sense of vision, compassion and integrity. Effective faith formation will enable Catholic educators to teach young people to be authors of their own history and to develop the necessary skills to work at creating a just and peaceful world for all of humankind. In helping students meet the Catholic School Graduate Expectations, Catholic educators are fostering the development of Jubilee people.

A Jubilee Hope

Jubilee 2000 is a new beginning. It provides the opportunity for the Ontario Catholic education community to reflect on what is being done to promote the faith development of beginning teachers, experienced teachers, principals and vice-principals, senior administrators, trustees, school councils, and support staff. During this holy Sabbath time, the hope is that the Catholic education community will use the occasion to further the development of long-term strategies to support and enhance the faith life of its members. This document outlines suggestions for the ongoing evangelization and faith development of each of the partners in our education system. Highlights of some of the successful practices which are presently being implemented across the province have been included. As well, there are questions for further discussion.

There is great hope for the new generation of teachers, administrators, trustees and school councils. The many Catholic educators who are leaving the profession were faced with the challenge of inheriting private schools run by religious orders and transforming them into a publicly funded Catholic school system administered by lay people. In a similar way, we believe that in this world searching for meaning, for healing, for justice and for peace, this new group of Catholic educators will, in the words of Pope John Paul II in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, bring the “true face of God” to a future generation of students.

BEGINNING TEACHERS

In Catholic schools today, teachers should have the opportunity of receiving the specific experiential knowledge of the mystery of Christ and of the Church. We need to look to the future and promote the establishment of formation centres for these teachers; ecclesiastical universities and faculties should do what they can to develop appropriate programs so that the teachers of tomorrow will be able to carry out their task with the competence and efficacy that is expected of them.

The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 1988

The most important resource in any school system is the classroom teacher. Hence, many school boards and professional teacher associations provide ongoing support and training for new teachers in their first few years in an effort to help them cope with those early and ongoing classroom demands. Orientation and induction programs, in-school staff development, and regular curriculum in-service are but several examples.

Boards and Associations do so in the belief that entry into the profession should not be thought of as an endurance test but as a time for professional growth. It is a time when new teachers should be given the opportunity to enhance their skills and professional knowledge in areas such as classroom management and discipline, instruction and assessment, communication and problem-solving, subject expertise and classroom planning.

Likewise, it is also a time when new teachers need opportunities for their own personal growth, for support in nurturing their sense of vocation and spiritual identity. It is a time to share beginning experiences with others and to listen and learn from both new and experienced teachers alike. Within Catholic schools especially, it is a time for deeper discernment of the distinctive nature of Catholic education and curriculum, the role of Gospel values in teaching and learning, and what it means to witness to the Gospel in everyday living.

To assist with these concerns, faith formation programs should provide learning experiences where entry level teachers:

- deepen their initiation into the Catholic education story
- broaden their understanding of the vision, ideals and mission of Catholic education
- link expectations-based learning with the ICE Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- explore the connection between personal faith and professional witness
- experience some periods of “soul” time: rest, reflection and prayer
- support each other in the vocational nature of teaching

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Many boards across the province provide orientation sessions for beginning teachers. While these sessions vary in content and duration, their purpose is to invite the beginning teacher to intentional and systematic faith formation. Some of the province’s successful practices in this area include:

1) Orientation Day for Beginning Teachers

This day emphasizes the following areas:

- i) The Vision of the Catholic School
- ii) The Vocation of the Catholic Teacher
- iii) Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- iv) Teaching Religious Education and Family Life
- v) Integrating Catholic Values throughout the Curriculum

(CDSB of Eastern Ontario)

2) Beginning Teacher Induction Program

Beginning teachers gather for one full day prior to school opening for in-service in the following areas:

- i) Catholic Values and the Vision of the Catholic Teacher
- ii) Ways teachers are visibly Catholic in the classroom, school and community

Follow-up in-service occurs once per term for the duration of the school year.

(Huron-Superior CDSB)

3) Beginning Teacher In-service Program

Teachers gather in late August for orientation in the following areas:

- i) The Culture of Catholic Schools
- ii) Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- iii) A Commissioning Mass for all new employees
- iv) Presentation of the Board's Mission Statement and a Bible

(Simcoe Muskoka CDSB)

4) Beginning Teacher Orientation

Beginning teachers gather in late August for sessions on the following:

- i) What it Means to be a Catholic Teacher
- ii) The Significance of Prayer and Liturgy
- iii) Catholic Curriculum
- iv) Spirituality
- v) Eucharistic Liturgy celebrating the first year successes

(York CDSB)

5) Beginning Teacher Induction – Two Year Plan For Growth

This program consists of a variety of full day and after school sessions. These sessions incorporate the elements of theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and follow-up.

Year One topics include:

- i) Living and Proclaiming the Faith in Community
- ii) Linking Assessment to Instruction

- iii) Classroom Management
- iv) A Eucharistic Celebration of the Ministry of Catholic Education

Year Two topics include:

- i) Building a Catholic Community in your Staffroom and Classroom
- ii) Linking Assessment to Instruction
- iii) Cooperative Learning
- iv) A Eucharistic Celebration of the Ministry of Catholic Education
(Dufferin-Peel CDSB)

6) **Beginning Teacher Induction Program**

Developed and directed by an eight member Beginning Teacher Induction Committee this program consists of four modules, each of which focuses on a theme. The most recent program included the following themes:

Module 1: The Story of Catholic Education in our Board

Theme: Celebrating the Gift of Teaching

Module 2: Surviving the First Days

Theme: Packing for the Journey

Module 3: Growth in Wisdom and Knowledge

Theme: Develop and Grow in Programs and Procedures

Module 4: Mentorship in Schools

Theme: Growing Together

(Toronto CDSB)

7) **Faith Formation Program for Beginning Teachers**

Participants gather once a month for eight 3 hour sessions for this course. It provides them with opportunities to reflect on their attitudes, beliefs and the practices that animate their lives in relation to God. Working in small groups each participant is required to prepare and lead prayer and to present one chapter of the required text during the course.

(Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB)

8) **Faith Formation Program for Beginning Teachers – *Make no mistake about it . . .***

This program for all beginning teachers is made up of three 4 hour sessions over the course of the school year: September / January / May . . . to meet the needs of first year teachers as they journey through their first year. At the end of the year, each first year teacher would share a brief *integration* journal or reflection paper on her or his first year experience in the Catholic school. *Make no mistake about it . . . the future of Catholic education depends more on the faith commitment of Catholic educators than on external circumstances.* Each session takes place at Loretto Spiritual Centre on a Friday afternoon – part school time and part personal time. The purpose: To introduce first year teachers to “the Catholic education” story; to explore further the meaning of vocation of the Catholic educator; and to present the different dimensions of the mission of Catholic education. The idea: To give beginning teachers the opportunity to reflect on the joys and challenges of teaching in a Catholic school as they make their way through their first

year; it is a reflection on one's concrete experience. This reflection on experience is enriched when one does it in a communal fashion with others going through the same experience. (Niagara CDSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for beginning teachers?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of new teachers?
3. What adjustments would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that beginning teachers are supported in their vocation as Catholic teachers?

EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

It is only through ongoing faith development that teachers can hope to meet the challenge of forming educational communities of faith. It is your ongoing education and your own deepening experience in the Catholic tradition which will expand your capacity to help students to become more constructive, creative and critical within our society.

This Moment of Promise, 1989

Teaching is a profession known for its many contributions to and sacrifices for the young of tomorrow. Indeed, it is a profession that often inspires human growth and social well-being. It is a profession committed to learning excellence and to community service. It is also a profession, however, where the daily pressures are enormous and the rewards of teaching are sometimes long in coming.

It is not surprising, therefore, that these pressures are experienced most acutely by teachers, the ones involved most directly in creating the learning climate within schools. For example, the recent changes to educational governance, finance and curriculum have been invoked with little concern or care for the professional well-being of teachers and the many responsibilities they already carry with regards to their students. Provincial legislation has, in effect, made it very difficult for teachers to feel good about themselves, created a working environment of high stress, and weakened the confidence teachers have in their contribution to the common good of society.

Increasingly, experienced teachers have come to know the hurt associated with an absence of expressions of gratitude. Consequently, they welcome support that recognizes their professional competence, that invites their contribution to building communities of faith, that assist in their efforts to create learning environments of literacy in the various disciplines, that offers ongoing professional development, and that honours their participation in school activities.

To that end, faith formation programs for experienced teachers should provide learning experiences where teachers:

- listen to colleagues and in faith share the struggle and the successes of teaching
- rekindle personal well-being through spiritual activity
- pray and worship together
- reflect and discern the call to educational ministry in these times
- review the vision and story of a Catholic education
- explore the relationship between Catholic School Graduate Expectations and curricula
- read and discuss pertinent Church documents related to Catholic education and social justice
- share signs of hope for the future of Catholic schools

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Commitment to ongoing faith formation programs for all board employees is evident in the successful practices listed below.

1) Faith Development Series

The series consists of six three-hour sessions, three offered during school hours and the other three held after school. Each school within the board is invited to send one participant. Participants must commit to all six sessions. Topics include:

- i) Faith Journeys
- ii) The Message and Mission of Jesus
- iii) Models of Church
- iv) Spirituality: Living the Christian Message
- v) A Vision for the Catholic School
- vi) Creativity in Religious Education and Family Life

(CDSB of Eastern Ontario)

2) Adult Faith Formation Sessions for All Staff

These sessions, held during the course of the school year, have attracted over fifty percent of the Board's staff. Each four-hour session consists of personal reflection time, common sharing and discussion, a convivial meal and prayer or Eucharist.

(Niagara CDSB)

3) Year Long Faith Formation Program

Between September and April, twenty-five participants gather for ten afternoon and evening sessions to examine and reflect on the Catholic faith tradition in dialogue with their faith experiences. The sample topics are as follows:

- i) Who Is This God We Pray To?
- ii) Is Sin Dead?
- iii) How Do We Heal a Broken Heart?
- iv) Whose Conscience Is It Anyway?
- v) If This Is Good News, Why Is No One Smiling?

(Waterloo CDSB)

4) Faith Ambassador Program

Rooted in the scripture text, 2 Corinthians:10, each school within the board has two designated faith ambassadors who assume the leadership for the ongoing faith life of the adult members of their school. Activities that help to foster this development include:

- i) An initial board wide gathering and orientation session
- ii) Twilight retreats
- iii) Saturday Faith Days

- iv) Evenings of reflection
- v) Prayer services (York CDSB)

5) The Blue Card Program

This adult faith formation program is a partnership enterprise with several neighbouring boards in Central Ontario and the Continuing Education Division of the University of St. Michael's College. The courses in this program are for general interest and vary in duration. Some are held once a week for six weeks or once a month for six months or full Saturday sessions. Sample titles of courses relating to faith development include:

- i) Philosophy in the Time of Christianity
- ii) Goodness: The Classical Christian Tradition
- iii) Introduction to Contemporary Catholic Philosophy
- iv) Iconography: Faith and Colour
- v) The Adolescent and Bereavement: How to minister to an adolescent who has lost a loved one
- vi) Love, Liberation and Laughter: Three Women's Stories in Action (Durham CDSB)

6) 35 Hour Program for Members of the Permanent Teaching Staff

The Board's policy regarding religious formation and renewal requires that permanent staff engage in an approved program of 35 hours designed to enhance their effectiveness as teachers in a Catholic school as well as to nourish their faith and support their spiritual needs. These approved courses are to be taken during a five year period. The policy offers the following 3 different approaches:

- i) approved courses
- ii) religious study in other areas
- iii) individual and/or group study plan

The latter two approaches require Board approval prior to being undertaken. The last approach suggested above is becoming increasingly popular. Following this model groups of teachers have embarked upon a series of twilight retreats, weekend retreats or organized small prayer/reflection sessions. Alternatively, some staffs have engaged in more formal sessions under the leadership of a chaplain or staff member. This approach normally involves between 10 and 12 sessions held once a week and often concludes with a Saturday retreat. The Religion and Family Life Department provides incentives and resources along with a list of possible themes. Financial support is given to assist school initiatives in faith formation. In addition to the 5 year renewal requirement the principals and vice principals respectively participate in an annual overnight retreat.

(Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for experienced teachers?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of experienced teachers?
3. What adjustments or additions would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that experienced teachers are supported in their efforts to build communities of faith?

OECTA UNIT PRESIDENTS AND LEADERSHIP DISCERNMENT PROGRAMS

Teachers should be trained with particular care, so that they may be enriched with both secular and religious knowledge, appropriately certified and may be equipped with an educational skill which reflects modern day findings. The need for an adequate formation is often felt most acutely in religious and spiritual areas; all too frequently, lay Catholics have not had a religious formation that is equal to their general, cultural, and most especially, professional formation.

Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith, 1982

Unit presidents serve as leaders within the Catholic education community in a variety of ways. The best known of these venues is collective bargaining. What is not as well known is the work unit presidents do to promote the principles of Catholic education and defend the constitutional rights of the Catholic school system within the province. As well, they also work for the professional growth of their colleagues and the improvement of their working conditions as directed by the social teachings of the Church.

Needless to say, leadership positions of this nature carry with them conflicting demands. Unit presidents are expected to handle portfolios as broad as collective bargaining and contract grievances to that of professional development and curriculum resources. In addition, they are often asked to represent the concerns of their local constituency while operating within the parameters set at the provincial level. Added to this is the expectation that unit presidents will function with a highest level of professional integrity, especially concerning relations with the wider education community.

Much like the teachers they serve, therefore, unit presidents require opportunities to develop their leadership skills and knowledge, especially in these changing times. Their efforts to clarify the professional identities of Catholic teachers, to establish an ethic of care within Catholic schools, to develop funded structures for ongoing professional learning and to create enlightened procedures that maximize the talents and teamwork of teaching colleagues are best served through programs that recognize the unique contributions unit presidents make to Catholic education.

To assist in this process, faith formation programs should provide learning opportunities where unit presidents:

- review the Catholic education story
- discuss the distinctive nature of Catholic education
- read and discuss the relationship between the social teachings of the Church and teacher working conditions
- pray and worship together with other unit presidents
- apply leadership theory to their role description as education leaders

- develop mission statements for their unit offices

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

1) Catholic Education Leadership Formation

This program follows the Ignatian Spirituality model teaching the participants the tools for spiritual discernment and how to be an effective spiritual leader. The program is facilitated by a team of four from within the Board and two from the local Jesuit College.

(Waterloo CDSB)

2) Journey Toward Leadership Program

Open to all Board staff this program is designed to allow participants an opportunity to explore leadership styles and develop skills and competencies needed for effective leadership. The sessions are intended to introduce participants to new trends and innovations in education leadership in any variety of roles. Four after school sessions throughout the course of the year include the following topics:

- i) Faith Dimensions of Catholic Leadership
- ii) Ministry/Board Structures
- iii) Accreditation
- iv) Issues in Catholic Education
- v) Panel discussion
- vi) Where do I go from here?

(Ottawa-Carleton CSB)

3) Foundations of Catholic Leadership

The course is designed for those who are discerning their call to leadership roles within the board. Sessions include the following modules and topics / themes:

- i) Spiritual Leadership
 - Biblical/Theological Foundations
 - Ecclesial/Liturgical Foundations
- ii) Personal Inventory
 - School Applications and Challenges
- iii) Leadership in Building a Catholic School Culture
 - Issues of Cultural Literacy and Diversity
 - The Management Dimension
 - Building the Catholic School Community: Images and Icons
 - Closing Liturgy of the Word
- iv) Retreat

(Toronto CDSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for leadership?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of leaders and those discerning leadership?
3. What adjustments would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what more can be done to enhance leadership formation?

**CHAPLAINS, PASTORAL CARE PERSONNEL
COORDINATORS AND CONSULTANTS OF
RELIGIOUS AND FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION,
AND
FAITH FORMATION CONSULTANTS**

School chaplaincy is a pastoral role carried out in an educational setting in a collaborative manner in order to promote the spiritual and human development of the members of the Catholic school community.

Guidelines for School Chaplaincy in Ontario, 1996

We believe that those entrusted with leadership positions in the Catholic Schools must be conspicuous for their goodness, sincerity and attachment to the faith. In other words, they are men and women who demonstrate in practice the very reason for the Catholic school's existence: an integrated Christian maturity, inspired by the Gospel and lived in authentic freedom and commitment.

Fulfilling the Promise: The Challenge of Leadership, 1993

Religious Education and Family Life Coordinators and Consultants, Faith Formation Consultants and those directly involved in pastoral ministry, namely Chaplains and Pastoral Care Personnel, play a vital role in the “how” of Christian Catholic living within schools and school systems. These positions require people who are faith-filled, theologically educated and pastorally skilled. Many of the faith formation and leadership programs profiled in this publication have been designed and facilitated by people serving in these roles.

Catholic education carries with it many of the same legislative and fiducial responsibilities as do other publicly funded systems of education. What makes the Catholic mandate distinctive from other systems, therefore, is its commitment to faith formation and learning as the foundation of its curricular enterprise.

This foundation is well-served by all those who teach and work in the name of Catholic education. Its cornerstone, however, is often built by faith animators and religion consultants, those who are asked to confirm, challenge and clarify the art of theological reflection as it applies to contemporary teaching and learning. Among these are included Chaplains, Pastoral Care Personnel, Coordinators of Religious Education and Family Life Education and Faith Formation Consultants.

These positions are, by their nature, spiritual and religious. Those who work in these positions demonstrate Christian ministry in many ways. They are usually in the front lines of building faith communities within schools and boards. They are usually at the very heart of the discussions as to the Catholic character of curriculum within schools and boards. And, most

importantly, they are usually leaders in the effort to connect current experience with God's presence and purpose.

To ensure that their ministry remains vibrant and refreshed, faith animators and religious consultants also require their own opportunities for spiritual discernment, faith growth and mutual sharing in community.

To assist with these concerns, faith formation programs should provide learning experiences where faith animators and religion consultants:

- deepen their call to Christian community
- pray and worship together
- broaden their understanding of Catholic curriculum
- explore the connection between current experience and theological reflection
- support each other in the vocational nature of their ministry
- review the vision and story of Catholic education

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Programs and occasions that support and foster the faith journeys of Coordinators, Consultants, Chaplains and Pastoral Care Personnel are:

- 1) Master in Religious Education Degree available at the University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, and Saint Paul University, Ottawa
- 2) Master in Divinity, The University of St. Michael's College, Toronto
- 3) Master in Pastoral Theology, Saint Paul University, Ottawa
- 4) Clinical Pastoral Education, Queen's University, Kingston
- 5) Youth Ministry Studies Certificate
- 6) Summer Institute in Religious Education, Saint Paul University, Ottawa
- 7) Summer Institute in Pastoral Liturgy, Saint Paul University, Ottawa
- 8) Symposium on Youth Ministry, The University of St. Michael's College, Toronto
- 9) Annual Conference for Catholic Religious Educators of Ontario (CRECO)
- 10) Annual Conference for Chaplains and Pastoral Care Personnel

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for faith animators and religion consultants?
2. How do these programs address the concerns of faith formation and faith learning?
3. What adjustments would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual nature of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that faith animators and religion consultants are supported in their work?

SUPPORT STAFF

You who are secretaries, building custodians and other support personnel are an integral part of the Catholic educational effort. There is no such thing as “just a job” in a Catholic school. There are only various forms of Christian service, each calling for extraordinary dedication.

This Moment of Promise, 1989

Experience would suggest that the strength of any organization is in its staff. This is certainly true of the world of education where, together with teachers and administrators, support personnel play an integral role in the operation of the Catholic education effort. In fact, it is often due to the high quality of their service that schools and boards function as effectively as they do.

These services are much more than just doing a job. They contribute to the various forms of Christian ministry active within Catholic education. Secretaries, child care workers, educational assistants, child youth workers and social workers, for example, are in daily contact with students and what they say and do can reveal as much about living the gospel as anything heard in the classroom. The same applies to custodians, technicians and attendants, especially in their relationship with parents and other members of the public.

To that end, support staff need opportunities to deepen and nurture their spiritual lives, especially in relation to their role as ambassadors of Catholic education. Employers who offer programs of this nature send a clear signal of the high regard with which they hold both their support staff and the Christian purpose of their work.

To assist in this process, faith formation programs should provide learning opportunities where support staff:

- review the Catholic character of the school/board mandate
- discuss issues of contemporary spirituality in relation to their work
- pray and worship together
- identify procedures and behaviour conducive to their roles as ambassadors of Catholic education
- build community based on shared values

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

The presence, commitment and dedication of Support Staff in any school provide valuable witnessing to students, teachers and administrators. They demonstrate that witnessing as they participate or lead in the following activities:

- Faith Days
- Faith Committees
- Faith Leadership Programs
- Conferences
- Director's Forums
- Site-level Pastoral Care Teams
- School Retreats, Word and Eucharistic Liturgies
- Parish Involvement
- Fund raising for outreach projects

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your association already provide for support staff?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of support staff?
3. What adjustments would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that support staff are supported in their efforts to serve as ambassadors of Catholic education?

PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

As no one else, you who are principals and vice principals have the unique opportunity to create the character of your school. Your reach extends both into the classroom and into the community. The life, the values, and the feeling of each school derive in large part from your commitment to your staff, to your students and to the gospel.

This Moment of Promise, 1989

Principals and vice principals serve not only as board administrators but as community religious and spiritual leaders as well. This unique role points to the need for ongoing professional learning in the areas of faith development, spirituality and the distinctive pedagogical features associated with the delivery of curriculum based on a Catholic educational worldview.

It also points to the need for school administrators who are attuned to various challenges that Catholic schools face in these changing times – administrators who can situate themselves within the larger narrative of the Catholic educational story and who can imagine a future for Catholic schools grounded in the best of the past, yet attuned to the challenging obstacles that accompany these times of educational reform.

It is not surprising, therefore, that administrators are increasingly expected to promote the religious and spiritual development of their education communities. Usually, this task entails creating and communicating a vision for the school, building community trust and support for the implementation of this vision, sponsoring faith formation of staff, supporting just and fair working conditions and discovering ways to inspire commitment, foster creativity and stimulate achievement in turning the Catholic vision of education into a reality.

To assist in this process, faith formation programs should provide learning experiences where principals/vice principals:

- review the vision of Catholic education
- refocus on the mission of Catholic education and how social context shapes the mission response
- support self and colleagues through prayer and community
- reflect on the challenge of servant leadership in these times
- help plan and strategize re: the implementation of Catholicity within schools
- keep informed of pertinent Church documents and teaching on Catholic education
- appropriate an understanding of the particular responsibility of the school administrator in terms of the Catholicity of the school
- build community with local pastors
- consider how to be effective faith animators within the school

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

While Principals and Vice Principals engage with teachers in many faith formation activities, a number of programs designed specifically for leadership formation are in place in the province. Some are described below.

1) **Leadership Faith Formation Program**

This 35 hour program consists of a blend of formal presentations, small group discussions, the writing of reflection papers, a four hour session in family of school groupings and an end of year retreat. The key goals of the program centre around:

- the vocation of a Catholic educator and leader
 - the mission of Catholic education
 - the importance of the conversation among leaders
- (Niagara CDSB)

2) **Theology for Educational Leadership Program**

Each year Principals and Vice Principals are required to participate in three half day sessions (one per term) studying and discussing current theological information or questions relative to their role as leaders.

(Halton CDSB)

3) **Five Year Religious Renewal**

During a five year period, Principals and Vice Principals are required to complete a course or approved program of 35 hours designed to enhance their effectiveness as Catholic leaders. Overnight retreats directed by an experienced facilitator are held annually for Principals and Vice Principals respectively. An annual 2 day Principals' Conference engages all Principals in presentations on leadership issues and spirituality.

(Hamilton-Wentworth CDSB)

4) **The Catholic Leadership Development Program for Principals and Vice-Principals**

This six module program engages the participants in the following areas:

- Spirituality
- Context and History
- Learning Communities
- Power
- Spiritual Leadership
- Retreat

(Algonquin & Lakeshore CDSB)

5) Faith Leadership Series for Principals and Vice Principals

This series is a follow up to the 30 hour Faith Leadership Certificate program jointly sponsored by the Board and the Institute for Catholic Education. The topics are determined by the group relative to their needs. Some topics include:

- Spirituality
- Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations
- Sacraments
- The Vision of Catholic Education (CDSB of Eastern Ontario)

6) Leadership Symposium for all Principals and Vice Principals

Held in a retreat setting for two and a half days, this symposium is facilitated by an outside group. The goals are to develop relationships and to enhance Board Direction for the upcoming school year. (Sudbury CDSB)

7) Imparting the Spirit Through Education

Vice Principal Professional Development Program consists of ten sessions (eight half days and two full days) during the school year. While the eight half days focus on the “how to” of principalship, the two full day sessions provide the participants with the opportunity to focus on and strengthen their Catholic School leadership profile. (Peterborough Victoria Northumberland & Clarington CDSB)

8) Leadership Training Program for Prospective Principals and Vice Principals

This program involves in-class instruction and reflective readings leading to an assignment or project in educational leadership. The spiritual development component considers the following topics:

- Catholic Leadership into the Millennium
- The Faith Development of Catholic Leaders
- Connecting with the Community (Ottawa-Carleton CSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for principals/vice principals?
2. How do these programs assist in faith formation of principals/vice principals?
3. What adjustments or additions would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs given the specific challenges principals/vice principals face in these times?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that principals/vice principals are supported in their role as religious and spiritual leaders?

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The objective is to change the attitudes of parents from being clients of the school to understanding themselves as vital and necessary members of the school community. The expectation is that children will learn better, be better educated, and be more interested in learning for life.

*Involving Other Parents: The Primary Focus of a Catholic School Council,
Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association, 1999*

It is often said that parents are the primary educators of their children and that Catholic schools extend and complement this educational process, especially in relation to values and faith. This partnership is more formally recognized in the Catholic School Council, a structure that allows parents to assume a more active role in education programs and services within their local community than previously existed in parent associations.

Parent representatives on school councils, therefore, volunteer to serve in a consultative fashion. They act somewhat like a bridge linking the concerns of parents regarding such matters as curriculum resources and conduct codes with the professional duties and concerns of school personnel. Hence, school council meetings become the very means whereby community members openly discuss and shape possible decisions as to the school's procedures and operation.

The success of school councils in this regard depends in part on relationships and the creation of a positive working environment which sustains common educational purpose. At the heart of this common purpose is the recognition that religious literacy and faith formation are distinct features of learning for publicly funded Catholic schools. Just as faith development remains a critical part of the education of children, so too with parents.

To assist Catholic school councils in their own ongoing faith formation, learning experiences should exist where members:

- deepen the Catholic education story
- keep informed of the challenges to the continued existence of Catholic schools within the province
- build community among council members
- take time to pray and worship together
- appreciate the ongoing challenge Catholic schools face in terms of cultural relativism and materialism
- be introduced to some of the wonderful prayer experiences and religion projects that take place in schools every day
- engage in reflection concerning the role of lived faith in families and the vitality and authenticity of Catholic curriculum as a faith animator

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

The advent of School Councils has inspired and prompted its members to seek ways to further develop their adult faith. Across the province members of school councils have found the following workshop helpful in fostering their faith life:

Putting Feet on the Gospels Workshop

Through prayers, exercises and discussions members of School Council were led to articulate what Catholic Schools and Catholic School Councils should be. This workshop invited participants to consider the flavour, scent, sound and shape of Catholicity and highlighted ways that school communities come to know Jesus.

(Simcoe Muskoka CDSB, York CDSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What program does your school/board already provide for Catholic school councils?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of council members?
3. What adjustments or additions would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that council members are supported in their role?

SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

The quality of life for both staff and students within our schools is perhaps your most significant challenge. The example you give of justice, charity, compassion and consistency will set the overall tone and ethos of your systems.

This Moment of Promise, 1989

In the complex and politically-charged world of today's educational setting, senior administrators face a multitude of tasks. While many of these provide policy direction for the management of the board, senior administrators also serve as stewards of the quality of life experienced within those very educational structures.

This call to stewardship directs senior administrators to develop system initiatives consistent with a vision of life rooted in the gospel, to improve and enhance the working and learning environments of all staff and students, and to establish an overall tone and ethos to the board's operation based on justice, charity, compassion and consistency.

Whereas senior administrators give pride of place to the importance of educational stewardship, implementation proves more challenging. Too often, their time and energy is taken up with issues of governance and finance rather than those of community and program, especially in discussion concerning budget, personnel and resources. Efforts to champion a distinctive Catholic character to the mission of Catholic schools can often be lost amidst the pragmatic and secular realities of funding envelopes, board reports and staffing models.

To assist Senior Administrators in discerning their role as stewards of Catholic education, faith formation programs should provide learning experiences where they:

- review the policies of the Board and discern how they enhance or limit the development of individual schools as Christian communities
- review the mission of the Board and its implications for budget priorities
- review Church documents and teaching on Catholic education
- examine the social teaching of the Church about unions
- consider how to be effective faith animators within the Board
- find time to pray and worship together as an administrative team
- review leadership criteria to determine its connection to the mandate of Catholic education
- examine theories of leadership in relation to the mission of Catholic schools
- support each other as agents of hope in challenging times

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Those who work as Directors of Education, Supervisory Officers or in other positions of administrative leadership frequently initiate, coordinate and facilitate programs, courses or forums which promote the faith development of others. However, programs have been developed in the province to foster the faith development of Senior Administrators. Two such programs are:

1) **The Certificate Program in Catholic Leadership**

This program is offered by the University of St. Michael's College, Continuing Education in collaboration with the Catholic Health Association of Ontario, The Institute for Catholic Education and Catholic Social Services. It consists of a series of compulsory and elective modules encompassing 120 contact hours over a period of two years.

It provides foundational understandings, historical perspectives and discussion of such issues as:

- The story of Catholic health and education in Ontario
- Models of Church
- Continuity and change in Church teaching
- Ecumenical dialogue
- The role of the bishops and the Bishop of Rome within the whole Church
- Canon law
- Ethics
- The social teachings of the Church
- The personal faith journey of the leader

To obtain a Certificate in Catholic Leadership, candidates must enrol in the "Certificate Track" of the program, participate in a total of 12 Continuing Education Units of coursework consisting of a combination of 4 required and 2 elective components, and complete a number of written assignments.

(ICE)

2) **The Institute of Leadership in Catholic Education**

The four Eastern Ontario Catholic Boards in partnership with St. Paul University, Ottawa, and the Institute for Catholic Education developed a Certificate Leadership Program consisting of a series of compulsory and elective modules encompassing 120 contact hours over a period of two years.

The four required modules and their respective themes are:

- i) Introductory Module
 - Fundamental Issues of Catholic Leadership
 - History of Catholic Education in Ontario
 - Catholic Social Teaching

- ii) Theological Module
 - Faith as relationship with God
 - Witness/Leaders of Faith in the First Testament
 - Jesus, the Witness of God
 - The Church Community: Witness of God's Activity
 - Worship
 - Ecofeminism
 - The Media and Youth
 - The Common Good
 - Interreligious Dialogue

- iii) Administrative Module
 - Canon Law and the Implications for Leaders in Catholic Education
 - Ethical Decision Making
 - The Role and Vision of the Bishop in Catholic Education
 - Traits of Catholic Institutions
 - Theological Reflection
 - Models of Leadership

- iv) Concluding Module
 - Integrating the Knowledge and Insights Gained into our Professional Activities

Electives

Participants will select from among a number of professional development activities and submit a written report and reflections of their participation in the events.

(St. Paul University)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board/association already provide for senior administrators?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of senior administrators?
3. What adjustments would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that senior administrators are supported in their vocation as stewards of Catholic education?
5. How does the system's budget support adult faith formation?

TRUSTEES

Your service as trustees will be as effective as the extent to which you yourselves are willing to be continually educated in the faith.

This Moment of Promise, 1989

From the beginning, the essential role of the Catholic trustee has been to protect and enhance the distinctiveness of Catholic education.

The constant feature of the political task that binds all trustees together is the call of service to the distinctive character of Catholic education. It is essential, therefore, that trustees work not only as sponsors of Catholic education but do so with the confidence that although all competing demands cannot be reconciled easily, they can be weighed with care, compassion and justice.

This expression of service provides ongoing witness to the belief that all Catholic partners (e.g. parents, students, teachers, support staff and clergy) share a fundamental commitment to work for the good of Catholic education. It further demonstrates that relationships which are built on common interest and mutual integrity are effective means which trustees can use in their efforts to discern what is best for Catholic schools within their jurisdiction.

To assist in this process, faith formation programs should provide learning experiences where trustees:

- learn or review the Catholic education story
- review and discuss the vision and ideals of Catholic education in contemporary times
- reflect and discuss the enormous importance of selecting committed Catholic leaders to administer their boards
- experience some time for common prayer and reflection on their ministry as trustees
- evaluate board policy and practice in terms of Catholic social teaching
- develop problem-solving skills related to conflict management
- build community relations both internally and with other partner groups
- reflect on collaboration as an essential element of their leadership role

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

Provincially

The Ontario Catholic School Trustees' Association (OCSTA) focuses on Adult Faith Formation in the form of two retreats annually for the board of directors, the annual general meeting and conference, and five regional meetings held each year in September and October.

Board of Directors' Retreat

Built around a particular theme, the retreat includes input in the form of a presentation, time for dialogue, quiet reflection and the celebration of Eucharist.

Board of Directors' Meetings

Meetings of the Board of Directors always begin with a celebration of the Eucharist and a homily by the Provincial Chaplain linking the Scripture Readings to the mission of Catholic education.

Annual General Meeting and Conference

Faith Development is a major component of the annual general meeting and conference. The Conference 2000 theme was "Catholic Learning Communities – the Future is Ours". The topic for the plenary session was "Aligning our Practices with our Mission".

Regional Meetings

Similarly, these meetings are designed around a theme. Recent themes included: Chaplaincy for Catholic Schools and Role of Catholic Trustees and Catholic Pupil Representatives.

Publications

OCSTA has published many documents which are intended to assist boards in Adult Faith Development. Recent publications include:

- Witnesses to Faith
- Visioning the Future
- The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education
- Catholic Education Week 2000
- Our Catholic Schools – Discussion Kit
- Becoming A Catholic School Trustee: A Call to Service and Stewardship in Christ
- Speaking As Brothers and Sisters
- The Evolution of Catholic School Councils
- Involving Other Parents: Catholic School Councils

Locally

Trustees align themselves with all the stakeholders in Catholic education. As a result their faith formation varies depending on the context within which they are working. One such example is as follows:

Two Year In-Service

Over a two year period, trustees engage in several sessions on their journey in faith.

Topics include:

- God's Call to Service
- Scripture
- Visioning in the Spirit: The Future of Catholic Education
- Journey in Leadership: Expectations for Trustees and School Boards
- Governing in Trust: Development and Implementation of a New Governance Model for Catholic School Boards (Waterloo CDSB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What programs does your board already provide for trustees?
2. How do these programs assist in the faith formation of trustees?
3. What adjustments or additions would you like to see in order to deepen the spiritual character of these programs?
4. Given your experience, what else can be done to ensure that trustees are supported in their role as political leaders within the Catholic education community?

ADDITIONAL FAITH FORMATION ACTIVITIES

In addition to the faith formation activities profiled, a variety of additional opportunities foster ongoing faith development. These include the following:

- Retreats, Eucharist and Liturgy of the Word
- OECTA/OCSTA Additional Qualification Courses in Religious Education
- University theology courses
- Conferences: Example: *When Faith Meets Pedagogy*
- Director's Forums
- Summer Institutes
- Rainbows' Facilitators' training
- Spiritual Direction
- Newsletters, journals, books and videos
- Involvement in the life of the Parish
- Jubilee Projects
- Mentoring Programs
- Faith Portfolios
- Outreach Projects / Social Justice Initiatives
- Third World Excursions

CATHOLIC EDUCATION DOCUMENTS

Documents of Vatican II, New Revised Edition, 1992

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, CCCB, 1997

The Catholic School On The Threshold Of The Third Millennium, Congregation For Catholic Education, 1998

This Moment of Promise, OCCB, 1989

Fulfilling the Promise, OCCB, 1993

Curriculum Matters – A Resource for Catholic Educators, ICE, 1996

Writing Curriculum for Catholic Schools – A Framework, ICE, 1996

Educating the Soul – Writing Curriculum for Catholic Secondary Schools, ICE, 1998

Ontario Catholic Education and the Corporate Sector, ICE, 1997

Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses To Faith, CCCB, 1982

Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community – Some Principles and Guidelines, 1990

The Religious Dimension of Education In a Catholic School, 1988

Witnesses to Faith, OCSTA, 1997

For The Good Of All, OCCB, 1991

Ontario Catholic Schools, OCSTA, 2000

Resources In Collective Bargaining And Catholic Social Teaching, OECTA, 1992

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NOTES